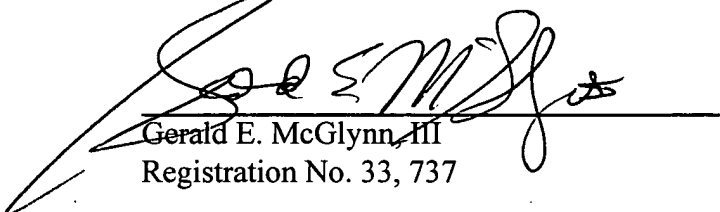


REMARKS

Claims 1-13 were originally pending in the PCT application to which priority is claimed in this case. In a communication dated September 8, 2000, applicant submitted new page 1 that included references to EP-A-0 528 643 and DE-A-196 51 229 in the background section of the application as well as new claims 1-12. By way of this Preliminary Amendment, the specification has been amended to conform to standard U.S. patent practice. No new matter has been added.

The applicant respectfully submits that the claims clearly distinguish over the prior art and are therefore allowable. Accordingly, applicant respectfully solicits favorable action toward allowance of the claims pending in this case.

Respectfully submitted,


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